

Deer Hunting and the Kalamazoo River Oil Spill

The following information may be helpful to those considering deer hunting in the area around the July 2010 Kalamazoo River oil spill, near Marshall in Calhoun County.

Can deer hunters still hunt in the area near the Kalamazoo River?

The governmental agencies responding to the oil spill urge hunters to avoid the area of the Kalamazoo River affected by the spill, which is the area from Interstate 69 west to the west end of Morrow Lake in Kalamazoo County. There are hundreds of workers on the river seven days a week engaged in cleanup and assessment activities, and the governmental agencies ask for your cooperation to promote worker safety. Also, the level of activity on the river each day will likely diminish hunting prospects.

Will there be oiled deer in the Kalamazoo River area?

Those who do choose to hunt in the area may see deer that have oil on them. Some oiled deer have been observed, specifically with oil on their legs and underbelly area. However, no oiled deer have been recovered for rehabilitation.

Is it safe to eat oiled deer?

The decision whether to consume deer or other wildlife affected by the oil spill lies solely with the hunter. DNRE consultations with toxicologists at the Michigan Department of Community Health and with oiled wildlife experts at the California Department of Fish and Game suggest that adverse health effects in those who consume oiled wildlife are unlikely. Avoiding consumption of the livers of oiled deer may be a prudent precaution.

Should hunters who harvest oiled deer or see oiled wildlife report it?

Yes. Please report any oiled wildlife to the Enbridge public information hotline at 800-306-6837.